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ICN Equipment Replacement Recommendation

Governor's Recommended Appropriation: \$1,997,500
Restricted Capitals Fund

Background:

The Iowa Communications Network (ICN) is the state-owned fiber optic network that is providing voice, video, data, and high-speed Internet services to authorized users of the network. Consistent, reliable telecommunications provides a vital connection to Iowa's educational institutions, government, libraries, homeland security, federal government offices which are all serviced by the ICN. ICN provides full-motion two-way video conferencing capabilities to over 6,000 Iowans each day in over 770 classrooms for distance education. There is a classroom within 15 miles of any location in Iowa.

Frequently Asked Questions regarding the Appropriation Recommendation:

Why is the ICN requesting funding to replace equipment?

This minimum investment will ensure that basic requirements of ICN users are met and address two different funding issues affecting the network:

- Replacement of aging equipment or a need for additional equipment on the network.
- A state appropriated capital investment requirement for the network to receive Universal Service Fund dollars on behalf of schools and libraries.

Why is this appropriation a means to obtain USF funding?

A state appropriated capital investment allows the state to receive Universal Service Fund monies on behalf of schools and libraries in accordance with the Code of Federal Regulations. Historically, ICN appropriations, including the appropriations to repay the Network's certificates of participation, have been identified as state support and were applied against the price of the video service provided to K-12 schools and libraries. This request is in keeping with this precedent and the state would be eligible for E-rate discounts during FY 2007.

What equipment should be replaced or added?

- **Voice (Local Telephone System) equipment serving state agencies in the capitol complex.** The manufacturer no longer supports the equipment and third-party refurbished replacement parts are becoming scarce. So far, the ICN has not experienced large outages. (Second part of three-year project)
- **Customer site field router that directs voice, video, and data traffic to the network.** Replacement of approximately 14% of the current field routers. Besides

the age induced risk factor, newer equipment maximizes the number of circuits routed and ensures industry compatible capabilities are available to ICN users.

- **Backbone video transmission equipment that was intended for use on the original network architecture.** The manufacturer no longer supports the equipment, increasing the potential for numerous video classroom and other service failures. The new equipment will provide an additional cost effective option for schools, government agencies, and other ICN users to connect. (Continuation of equipment replacement begun in FY 2006)
- **Internet Protocol technology equipment.** Many ICN users video are moving to Internet Protocol (IP) technology. More simultaneous and better quality Video over IP conferences would be available than are currently supported. The current equipment will be reassigned to meet other IP bandwidth requirements.
- **Update of equipment and software for video scheduling.** To ensure each video session comes up as scheduled, several replacement servers (computers) are required. Updated software is required for seamless management and coordination between the current and future technologies.

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